

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SCCT-02 SAB-01 SAM-01 DRC-01 IO-14 (ISO) W

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R 141329Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1855

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1528

E.OM 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, IS, EG

SUBJ: MRS SADAT WRITES TO SISTER OF MISSING ISRAELI

SOLDIER

REF: CAIRO 1120, TEL AVIV 1394

1. ISRAELI PRESS MARCH 14 GIVES BANNER FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MRS SADAT AND SISTER OF ISRAELI SOLDIER MISSING IN ACTION, AND TO FACT THAT LETTERS HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN ARAB LANGUAGE WEEKLY WITH WIDE DISSEMINATION IN ARAB WORLD (REFTELS). YEDIOT AHARONOT CHARACTERIZES EVENT AS AN " EXCHANGE OF DEEPLY MOVING LETTERS" AND CARRIES FULL TEXT. OTHER NEWSPAPERS CARRY LENGTHY EXTRACTS.

2. IN FIRST SPAT OF COMMENTARIES, ISRAELI JOURNALISTS NOTE THAT PUBLICATION OF THESE LETTERS IN EGYPT IS ONE SIGN OF CONCILIATORY ATMOSPHERE NOW PREVAILING IN EGYPT, AND THAT PUBLICATION COULD HAVE OCCURRED ONLY WITH EXPLICIT AUTHORIZATION OF PRESIDENT SADAT. IT IS NOTED THAT EVEN PROPAGANDISTIC ELEMENTS OF MRS SADAT'S LETTER ARE MODERATE IN TONE. DAVAR'S ESHED ADDS THAT US AND ISRAELI

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OFFICIAL SOURCES REGARD LETTERS AS SIGN OF NEW SPIRIT IN EGYPT.

3. COMMENT. WE ARE STRONGLY INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT MFA, AFTER WE CALLED THEIR ATTENTION TO PUBLICATION OF CORRESPONDENCE IN ARAB WORLD, MADE SURE THAT THE EXCHANGE RECEIVED PROMINENT COVERAGE IN ISRAELI PRESS. IN FACT, MFA TODAY ALERTED US TO ISRAELI COVERAGE. WE EXPECT THAT EDITORIAL COMMENT WILL CONTINUE FOR NEXT SEVERAL DAYS. THESE LETTERS, IN ADDITION TO OTHER SIGNS CURRENTLY EMANATING FROM EGYPT OF SADAT'S INTENTIONS TO SEEK PEACE ARRANGEMENT, SHOULD HELP TO PREPARE ISRAELI PUBLIC FOR NEXT PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH EGYPT. ISRAELIS OF COURSE WILL BE LOOKING FOR FURTHER INDICATIONS OF NEW TREND AS THEY GET CLOSER TO FACING HARD DECISIONS WHICH LIE AHEAD.
KEATING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, PUBLICATIONS, MIA, PEACE TALKS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TELAV01528
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740342/aaaabnfx.tel
Line Count: 74
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: CAIRO 1120, TEL AVIV 1394
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Aug-2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <09 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MRS SADAT WRITES TO SISTER OF MISSING ISRAELI SOLDIER
TAGS: PFOR, IS, EG, (SADAT, ANWAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005